

# No longer a pushover

It's amazing what a difference a few years can make!

Back in 1974, Vernon Senior Secondary School was emerging as one of the province's volleyball powers. Due to the popularity of volleyball, basketball was taking a backseat and in danger of dying out completely.

Then, along came Rick Iring who decided it was time the Vernon Panthers became more than an also-ran. To date, Panthers have not made it to the B.C. tournament, or won an Okanagan title, but the school has a basketball team it can be proud of.

Iring has developed a strong basketball feeder system in Vernon, and as a result, Panthers are improving every year. In 1978, they finished second in the South Okanagan. Vernon would be ranked number one in the Interior this season.

Penticon Lakers, Kelowna Owls, and Rutland Woodvoo are all ranked among the top 10 teams in the province.

Panthers have a good team, and for the first time, are getting lots of support from the school in the form of cheerleaders, a pep band, and fans.

## LACKS HEIGHT

However, one problem Iring has not been able to cure is lack of height. Tallest players on the club are Tom Davison and Brent Zimmer, both about 6'3". Up against some of the south's big men at 6'8" and 6'9", the difference in size can cause problems. But, for their height, Panthers have an excellent rebounding club — which gets us back to volleyball.

Four members of the hoop team also play volleyball. Mike Kormos, Dave Turner, Jim Tilton and Kirk Christian are members of the VSSS squad that placed second in the provincial volleyball tournament last year. Although Iring is not a fan of volleyball because it hinders his team getting an early season start, he does appreciate the fact that volleyball helps a player's vertical jumping ability.

Kormos, who stands only 5'11", on his toes, has turned into one of the Partner's top rebounders. Christian, who plays guard, is also terrific on the boards.

Despite good coaching, school spirit, and better-than-average rebounding, Panthers are still considered a long-shot to make it to the B.C. tourney.

## SHOULD WIN ZONE

Panthers should win the north zone of the valley, with little trouble, says Iring. The VSSS and Salmon Arm Gloms may chase them a bit. But, in the Okanagan Tourney, the best from the south and north fight for only two berths in the B.C. tourney.

Therefore, Vernon has the unpleasant task of trying to knock off two of the three from down south. Lakers are good hearted and a good super team. Rutland has 11-entire first string back from last year, and Owls have a tall, aggressive team.

Iring said, "Kelowna is out of the floor in the first league game this year, but I'm not going to let that happen again. We are going to try to peak for the valley meet (March 30)."

In order to neutralize the other teams' height advantage, Iring has his club learning a series of presses and shifting zone defenses.

He said, "I'm not too worried about our offence. I think it will hold up. But, we'll have to be super on defence." Win or lose in the valley tournament, no longer can VSSS be called an also-ran.

## Daily News

**SUN'S Page**

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VERNON DAILY NEWS, FRIDAY, JAN. 21, 1977

## SPORTS BRIEFS

**SEASON WINS**  
W. L. Seaton defeated Kai School 54-38 in Junior girls' basketball action on Thursday. Laurie Ferguson and Linda Jones scored 10 points each on the team while Norma Sidnick scored 10 for Kai. In boys' action, Steve Stier scored 14 points as Seaton beat Kai 48-31.

**AT NORRAM**  
Vernon Panthers travel to North Kamloops tonight to take on the Saints in high school basketball action at 8:30 p.m. That game will be preceded, at 7 p.m., by a girls' game between Vernon Royals and NorKam.

**SKIERS MEET**  
North Okanagan Cross-country ski club will be holding its monthly meeting on Jan. 27, at 7:30 p.m. in the Clarendon School cafeteria. All members are urged to attend.

**TWO GAMES**  
Two games were played Thursday in men's Poyey Broomball League action. Centennial Rink, Riley Twyford scored the only goal of the game as Block Brothers blanked Vernon Raiders 1-0. In the other contest, Don Bridgman, Ralph Nelson and Chris Bahay scored one each as Okanagan College blanked Vernon most Siders 3-0.

**G WEEKEND**  
Vernon Junior Bays put their unbeaten streak on the



## ARM WRESTLING PRACTICE

Grade 12 students Margaret VanCaen, left, and Jill Wilson practice arm wrestling for Vernon

Senior Secondary School's upcoming Chimo Days sports festival. Dozens of events, for both teachers

and students, will be held Feb. 11-18. Besides arm wrestling, competitions will be held in bubble gum

(Daily News Photo)

# Slumping Vikings thumped by Cents

Merritt Centennials crushed Vernon Vikings 6-3 before 500 fans in B.C. Junior Hockey League action Thursday in the Nicola Valley city.

**BCJHL STANDINGS**

Team	GP	W	L	T	PTS
Kelowna	51	34	14	17	71
Penticon	50	33	15	2	68
Vernon	50	24	24	4	52
Merritt	50	15	34	11	30
Kamloops	51	15	36	9	30
Coast Division					
Nanaimo	52	34	15	3	71
Westridge	47	24	22	1	51
Langley	50	23	27	4	47
Abbotsford	48	17	29	2	34

The game was postponed last week when Vikings could not make the trip to Merritt because of bad road conditions. Vikings were further off if the game had been cancelled permanently.

Vikings' General Manager Vern Dye told the Daily News that the team was disappointed against the Cents. Dye said, "With the exception of one or two players,

our guys weren't even in the game."

It was the sixth loss, in the last eight games, for the sagging Vikings.

Vernon led 1-0 at the end of the first period, but Merritt tied 3-2 after the second.

Gary Sirkin, Pat Rabbitt, Glen Johnson, Eddie Beers, Paul Chadwick, and Don Nachbaur scored for the Centennials.

**SCORED PAIR**  
Brian Maser, with two goals, and Gary Gassoff replied for the Vikings. Gassoff's goal was his 20th of the season, while Maser's pair gives him 19, tops in the BCJHL for a defenceman.

Vernon netminder Keith Dobson blocked 37 shots while Brad Carp turned away 38 shots in the Merritt net. Dye said as far as he is concerned, Ferner should have stopped three of the goals.

Dye said, "But, it certainly wasn't all Keith's fault. Our third line was awful."

Merritt was handed six of 11 minor penalties and one of two fighting majors.

Cluttings are back in action tonight when they host Kelowna Buckaroos at 8 p.m. Bucks have the best record in the league and have defeated Vernon in six of seven meetings this season.

**100 POINTS**  
Kelowna fattened its first-place margin Thursday by dumping Kamloops Braves 6-

3. Scott MacLeod led the Bucks' attack with a goal and four assists, giving him 100 points this season.

Meanwhile on the coast, last-place Abbotsford Flyers got three goals from Jim Dobson to upset Bellingham Blazers 5-3 before 794 fans in the Washington State city.

In other games tonight, Blazers meet the Vees in Penticon; Flyers visit the Lords in Langley, and Maple Ridge Bruins host Nanaimo Clippers.

# HOOP ROUND-UP

## Glassmen win ninth straight

Three games were played Thursday in Men's Recreation Basketball League action at W.L. Seaton School.

Undeafed H and L Glass People 41-29 in their 11th victory by downing Hookers 65-46.

Meanwhile, Birds dropped their ninth straight game, this time 50-42 to Vernon Lodge Tigers. Teachers had little trouble trouncing the Camels 54-34.

**PULLTON WINS**  
In junior high school girls' action, Helen Harvey sunk 13 points as Pullton consecutively hammered Armstrong 37-25.

Pullton is back in action tonight when the girls take on Vernon Senior Secondary School's junior varsity team, at VSSS, at 8:30 p.m. That game will be followed by an exhibition game between Okanagan College and Vernon senior women's all-star team at 7 p.m.

Thursday in minor boys' basketball play at VSSS. People's line-point performance by Alan Gee. Eagles dropped a 25-23 decision to Falcons.

In the other game, Roadrunners took a 20-10 half-time lead and went on to trounce Rebels 40-23.

In women's Tri-Lake Basketball League action, Betty Sherk dropped in 28 points as Grey Machine trounced Enderby Ladies 51-26. Suzy Kohorst sunk 12 for the winners.

Vernonia Ginn handed most of Enderby's scoring with 20 points.

**MAIDS TROUNCED**  
Armstrong Builders had little trouble "pumping iron" at VSSS, at 8:30 p.m. The game will be followed by an exhibition game between Okanagan College and Vernon senior women's all-star team at 7 p.m.

Two games were played



GARY GASSOFF ... number 50

## Lineman returns to east

EDMONTON (CP) — Offensive guard Ed Chalupka has landed back in the Eastern Football Conference after the second trade this week sent him to Toronto Argonauts.

Argon general manager Dick Shatto said the Toronto club received Chalupka, a former Hamilton Tiger-Cats player, from British Columbia Lions to complete a deal last season that gave B.C. the rights to Toronto lineman Morris Zubkovich.

Only a day earlier, Hamilton sent Chalupka to the Lions to complete an earlier deal in which the Ticats acquired B.C. wide receiver Slade Wilks, 30, a veteran of six years with the Ticats, who played out his option with Hamilton and could become free to sign with any Canadian Football League club if he does not sign a contract before June 1.

# Phoenix goalie leads the attack

**BY THE CANADIAN PRESS**  
Goalkeeper Gary Kurt of Phoenix Roadrunners has considered an offensive threat in the books of most World Hockey Association teams—yet.

**WHA East Division**

Club	W	L	T	P	P
Quebec	25	15	10	14	53
Cincinnati	22	19	7	18	44
Indianapolis	22	18	14	10	42
Edmonton	18	13	12	17	43
New England	17	26	4	15	38

Blaine Stoughton and Rich Leduc beat Kurt in the second period and Dennis Sobchuk pulled Cincinnati to within one early in the third before Phoenix rallied for five consecutive goals.

Left winger Marc Tardif scored a power-play goal at 7:39 of the third period to give the Nordiques their win over the Whalers, Quebec's seventh in row.

Tardif's 28th goal of the season came on a 30-foot wrist shot which slipped between the pads of Whalers goaltender Christer Abrahamson.

period to give the Roadrunners a 4-3 lead.

Kurt's record-breaking assist came on the Roadrunners' next goal, Gary Lariviere's fifth of the season at 6:53 of the final period.

Phoenix goalie Kurt, a 29-year-old native of Kitchener, Ont., set a WHA record Thursday night when he assisted on three Phoenix goals as the Roadrunners beat Cincinnati Stingers 9-4.

The only other goaltender to come close to Kurt's total in a single game is Calgary's Don McLeod, who has assisted on two goals in the same game on two occasions. McLeod already has five assists this season while Kurt's total is his first of the season.

Kurt was no slouch defensively either, stopping 38 Cincinnati drives while his teammates poured 51 on the Stingers' goal.

In other games Thursday night, Quebec Nordiques edged New England Whalers 6-4 and San Diego Mariners ruined the debut of new Edmonton goalie Lou Lefevre by beating the Oilers 5-1.

Kurt assisted on Andre Hize's goal at 2:39 of the second period to put Phoenix ahead 3-0. Kurt then helped set up Ron Huston's 13th goal of the season at 4:00 of the third

# Lapointe not missed as Habs bomb Flyers

**BY LARRY HARDING**  
New Canadian Press

Montreal Canadiens were worried about the absence of their defenceman Guy Lapointe in Thursday's game against Philadelphia Flyers, but their concern was unnecessary.

The win moved the Islanders into a first-place tie with the Flyers atop the Patrick division, with the New York team having a game in hand.

Paul Gardner scored once in the third period and then set up two other goals to lead the Islanders to their win over the Devils. The loss was the sixth in a row for the Red Wings who have yet to win in eight outings in 1977.

The Red Wings contest produced an NHL first as brothers were the opposing coaches, with John Wilson behind the bench of the Rockies and brother Larry playing out his option with Hamilton and could become free to sign with any Canadian Football League club if he does not sign a contract before June 1.

They now have won seven in a row over the Flyers, including last season's playoffs when Shut fired at Parent from between the circles. Parent stopped the puck but fell, and Lafleur poked it past him to send the Canadiens ahead 3-2.

Yvan Cournoyer, Pierre Bouchard and Yvon Lambert had the other Montreal goals while the white linemate Guy Lafleur scored the winner.

The score was tied at 2-2 when Shut fired at Parent from between the circles. Parent stopped the puck but fell, and Lafleur poked it past him to send the Canadiens ahead 3-2.

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**TEAM STANDINGS**

Team	W	L	T	P	PTS
Les Quatre	20	1	0	0	40
Frank's Tanks	14	7	0	0	28
Len's Bunch	14	7	0	0	28
Hi Lo	14	7	0	0	28

**TEAM STANDINGS**

Team	W	L	T	P	PTS
South Yukon	35	2	0	0	70
Sky's Finger	35	2	0	0	70
Fraser Fruit	25	12	0	0	50
VPO	23	14	0	0	46

**TEAM STANDINGS**

Team	W	L	T	P	PTS
Women's high single	1	0	0	0	2
Women's high triple	1	0	0	0	2
Women's high average	1	0	0	0	2

**TEAM STANDINGS**

Team	W	L	T	P	PTS
Women's high single	1	0	0	0	2
Women's high triple	1	0	0	0	2
Women's high average	1	0	0	0	2

Women's high single - Carol Skidmore 22, high triple - Carol Skidmore 18, high average - Carol Skidmore 18.

Women's high single - Rod Brasin 22, high triple - Rod Brasin 18, high average - Rod Brasin 18.

Men's high single - Willie Tabala 25, high triple - Willie Tabala 25, high average - Willie Tabala 25.

Men's high single - Doran Muel 25, high triple - Doran Muel 25, high average - Doran Muel 25.

Women's high single - Willie Weller 20, high triple - Willie Weller 20, high average - Willie Weller 20.

Women's high single - Groaners 17, high triple - Groaners 17, high average - Groaners 17.

Men's high single - Camero 33, high triple - Camero 33, high average - Camero 33.

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